

Fall 2015

Fences

School of Theatre and Dance
Illinois State University

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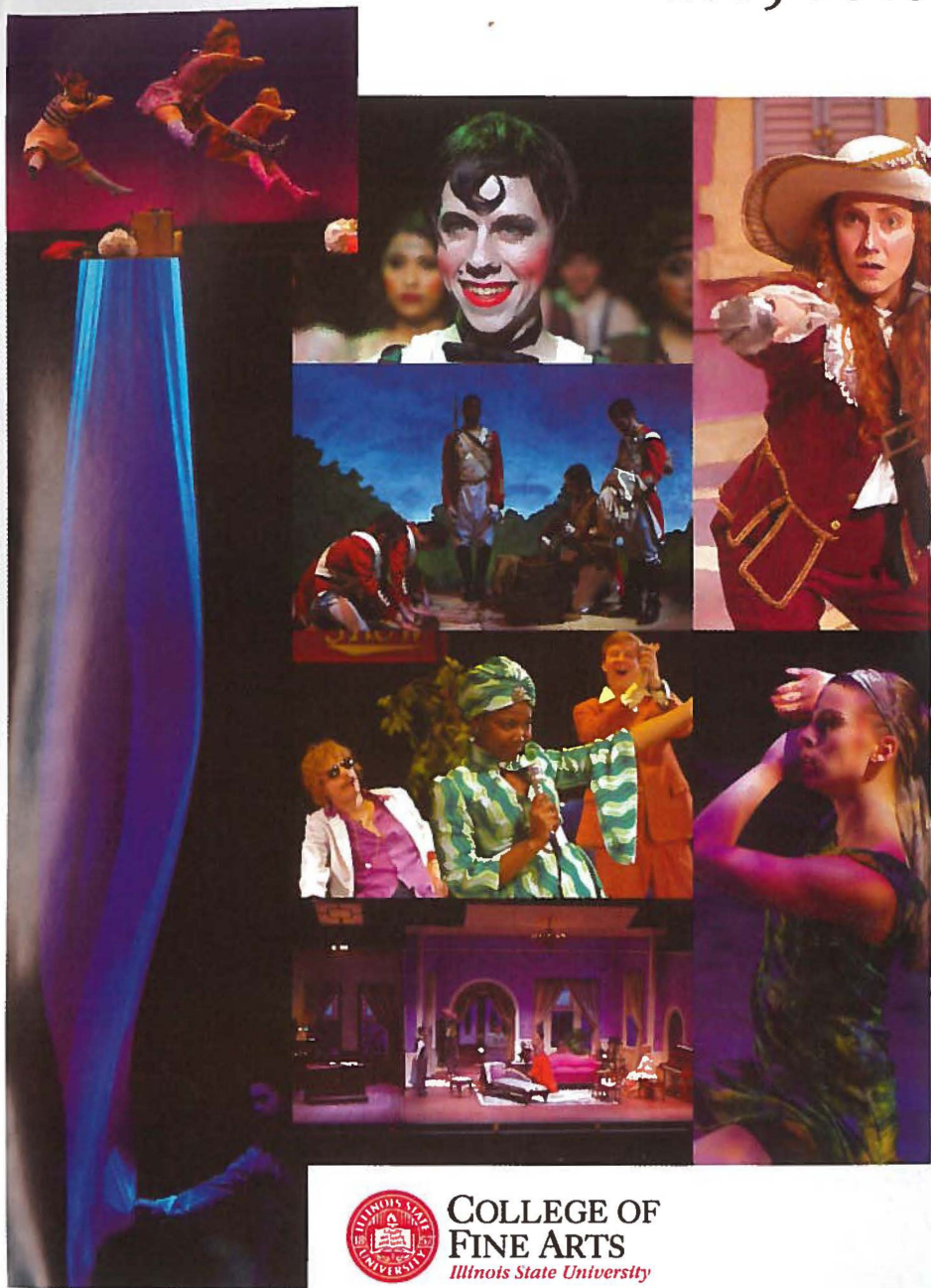
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Fences by August Wilson

Cast: (In order of appearance)

Troy Maxson.....	Hananiah Wiggins
Jim Bono, Troy's friend	Timothy Jefferson
Rose, Troy's wife	Marixa Ford
Lyons, Troy's oldest son by previous marriage.....	Bryson Thomas
Gabriel, Troy's brother	Gregory Hicks
Cory, Troy and Rose's son	Emmanuel Jackson
Raynell, Troy's daughter.....	Janiya Franklin

Director
DUANE BOUTTÉ

Associate Director
LESLIE SLOAN ORR

Assistant Director
ANNE TOBIN

Set Design
HANNAH BEAUDRY

Costume Design/Hair/Make-up
SAMI PEROUTKA

Lighting Design
FRANCES SKURSKI

Fight & Movement Direction
PAUL DENNHARDT

Sound Design
ANDREW HILL*

Choreography
ABRECIA HAILLASSELLISSE-MANKELKLOTE

Props Master
DAVID LINK

Dramaturgy
KELSEY KOTT

Stage Manager
LINDSAY ROWLEY

Time and Setting:

Act 1 - Pittsburg, 1957

Act 2 - Pittsburg, 1957 and 1965

* Denotes Master of Fine Arts or Master of Arts/Science candidate

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The Fences Production Staff

Technical Director.....	Dave George
Master Electrician.....	Cassie Mings
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Mackenzie Schultz, Chelsie Kolarik
Assistant Master Electrician/ Light Board Operator.....	Kayla Brown
Assistant Sound Designer.....	Patrick Barrera
Master Carpenter.....	Kaylie Henderson
Charge Artist.....	Hannah Beaudry
Wardrobe Supervisor.....	Ian Liberman
Run Crew.....	LaMar Hawkins, Robert Hardin, Simran Sachdev, Annabel Oliver
Light Crew.....	Anders Titus, Danna Goodman, Precious Rule
Paint Crew.....	Megan Wunglueck, Anthony Harden, Kayla Motley, Cayla Jones, Colleen McGarry
Wardrobe Crew.....	Carlee Campbell, Allison Steben, Anne Marie Owens, Ethan Rickard, Jack Van Boven

SPECIAL THANKS:

Kim Pereira, Jaimie Taylor, John Stark, John Link, Al Boutté, Ann Haugo,
Maggie Hart, Connor Herbeck, Amber Saul, Lindsay Siders

Fences Dramaturgy Program Notes

Two time Pulitzer-prize winner August Wilson first gained exposure with his play *Jitney*, set in 1977. Following that, he wrote *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* set in 1927. Then, he wrote *Fences*.

The play is set in 1957. This is the same year the first Civil Rights Act is passed to protect African-American voting rights, nine African-American students are escorted into Little Rock Central High School by a group of federal troops to force integration of education, and Hank Aaron is named the National League's MVP. This is the history that serves as the backdrop for a family living on expired dreams. The protagonist, Troy Maxson, is described by Kenny Leon (director of the dazzling 2010 Broadway revival starring Denzel Washington and Viola Davis) as being undeniably epic because "there is not a character, definitely not in American theatre, that is on the scale of Troy Maxson. He is Othello, Macbeth, and Willy Loman combined." What makes the story of Troy Maxson so compelling is that there are moments when he is the most relatable and universal character on

stage, and others when he is utterly terrifying. Because of this, the other characters in his life cope with a never-ending cycle of turmoil. The cycle motif is also rooted in Wilson's body of work, affectionately referred to as "The Century Cycle." After writing *Fences*, Wilson realized that he had written three plays set in three different decades of the 20th century, and so he decided to continue that until he had ten plays, all dealing with African-Americans' experiences throughout time.

With *Fences*, there are two outs in the bottom of the ninth. We are on the brink of the Civil Rights movement, and by the end of the play, the year is 1965 and we see each of the characters grasping the promise of a dream, a clear reference to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech, which occurred just two years prior.

Nearly fifty years after King's pivotal speech, *Fences* is known as one of the greatest American classics because Wilson captures both the progressive and unenlightened discourses of the 1950s and honestly portrays a family struggling within those tensions.

-Kelsey Kott
Fences Dramaturgy

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE About The Play

Near the turn of the century, the destitute of Europe sprang on the city with tenacious claws and an honest and solid dream. The city devoured them. They swelled its belly until it burst into a thousand furnaces and sewing machines, a thousand butcher shops and bakers' ovens, a thousand churches and hospitals and funeral parlors and money-lenders. The city grew. It nourished itself and offered each man a partnership limited only by his talent, his guile, and his willingness and capacity for hard work. For the immigrants of Europe, a dream dared and won true.

The descendants of African slaves were offered no such welcome or participation. They came from places called the Carolinas and the Virginias, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. They came strong, eager, searching. The city rejected them and they fled and settled

along the riverbanks and under bridges in shallow, ramshackle houses made of sticks and tar-paper. They collected rags and wood. They sold the use of their muscles and their bodies. They cleaned houses and washed clothes, they shined shoes, and in quiet desperation and vengeful pride, they stole, and lived in pursuit of their own dream. That they could breathe free, finally, and stand to meet life with the force of dignity and whatever eloquence the heart could call upon.

By 1957, the hard-won victories of the European immigrants had solidified the industrial might of America. War had been confronted and won with new energies that used loyalty and patriotism as its fuel. Life was rich, full, and flourishing. The Milwaukee Braves won the World Series, and the hot winds of change that would make the sixties a turbulent, racing, dangerous, and provocative decade had not yet begun to blow full.

— August Wilson

Started in 1969 by Roger L. Stevens, the Kennedy Center's founding chairman, the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) is a national theater program involving 18,000 students from colleges and universities nationwide, which has served as a catalyst in improving the quality of college theater in the United States. The KCACTF has grown into a network of more than 600 academic institutions throughout the country, where theater departments and student artists showcase their work and receive outside assessment by KCACTF respondents.

The goals of the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival are:

to encourage, recognize, and celebrate the finest and most diverse work produced in university and college theater programs;



to provide opportunities for participants to develop their theater skills and insight; and achieve professionalism;

to improve the quality of college and university theater in America;

to encourage colleges and universities to give distinguished productions of new plays, especially those written by students; the classics, revitalized or newly conceived; and experimental works.

Through state, regional, and national festivals, KCACTF participants celebrate the creative process, see one another's work, and share experiences and insights within the community of theater artists. The KCACTF honors excellence of overall production and offers student artists individual recognition through awards and scholarships in playwriting, acting, criticism, directing, and design.

The KCACTF is a year-round program in eight geographic regions in the United States. Regional activities are coordinated through eight KCACTF regional chairs and eight KCACTF playwriting awards chairs. With funding and administrative support from the Kennedy Center, the regional chair coordinates with the Co-Managers of KCACTF all aspects of the adjudication of productions on the local and regional level and supervises regional-level KCACTF award competitions. The playwriting chair works with schools that have entered new and student-written plays by providing expertise in the development of new scripts—assessment specifically designed for a developing play—and by providing information on the numerous playwriting awards offered.

In January and February of each year, regional festivals showcase the finest of each region's entered productions and offer a variety of activities, including workshops, symposia, and regional-level award programs. Regional festival productions are judged by a panel of three judges selected by the Kennedy Center and the KCACTF national committee. These judges in consultation with the Artistic Director select four to six of the best and most diverse regional festival productions to be showcased in the spring at the annual noncompetitive national festival at the Kennedy Center, all expenses paid.

Since its inception, KCACTF has given more than 400,000 college theater students the opportunity to have their work critiqued, improve their dramatic skills and receive national recognition for excellence. More than 16 million theatergoers have attended approximately 10,000 festival productions nationwide.

The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival is sponsored by Delta.

Brad Barker

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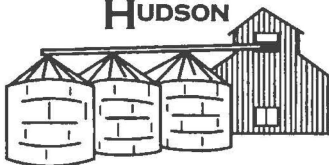
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